

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A hepatitis C virus (HCV) replicating cell line, wherein said cell line is a mouse cell line comprising an HCV genome.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 1, wherein the mouse cell line comprises mouse cells of hepatic origin.

5. (Original) The cell line of claim 4, wherein the mouse cells are Hepal-6 cells.

6. (Original) The cell line of claim 4, wherein the mouse cells are AML12 cells.

7. (Withdrawn) A non-human, non-chimpanzee, non-monkey, non-mosquito living host organism comprising cells which replicate HCV.

8. (Withdrawn) The living host organism of claim 7, which is a mouse.

9. (Previously Presented) A method for producing the cell line of claim 20, comprising:

a) obtaining total RNA from a human hepatic cell culture that replicates HCV, said total RNA comprising a selection marker which renders cells expressing said RNA resistant to a selection agent;

b) introducing the total RNA into human non-hepatic cells;

c) selecting those cells which grow in the presence of said selection agent and replicate HCV; and

d) generating a cell line from the cells of step c).

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) A method of producing the cell line of claim 1, comprising:

a) obtaining total RNA from a human non-hepatic cell culture that replicates HCV, said total RNA comprising a selection marker which renders cells expressing said RNA resistant to a selection agent;

b) introducing the total RNA into mouse cells;

c) selecting those cells which grow in the presence of said selection agent and replicate HCV; and

d) generating a cell line from the cells of step c).

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Presented) A method for screening test compounds which inhibit HCV replication, comprising:

a) culturing the cell line of claim 1 in the presence and absence of a test compound; and

b) assaying HCV replication levels in the presence and absence of said test compound, wherein a reduced HCV replication level in the presence of said test compound is indicative that said test compound inhibits HCV replication.

14. (Withdrawn) An HCV polynucleotide having at least one of the mutations shown in Table 11.

15. (Withdrawn) A polyprotein encoded by the polynucleotide of claim 14.

16. (Previously Presented) A method for screening test compounds which modulate the antiviral response induced by interferon alpha (IFN- α) comprising

a) culturing the cell line of claim 1 in the presence and absence of a test compound;

b) contacting the cells of step a) with IFN- α ; and

c) measuring the HCV replication level in the presence and absence of said compound thereby identifying agents which modulate the antiviral response mediated by IFN- α as a function of altered HCV levels.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the antiviral response is enhanced.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the antiviral response is inhibited.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) A hepatitis C virus (HCV) replicating cell line, wherein said cell line is a human non-hepatic cell line and wherein said cell line comprises ~~the RNA from a second cell line which comprises an HCV genome~~ genomic HCV RNA and has been transfected with total RNA from a second HCV replicating human cell line.

21. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 20, wherein the human non-hepatic cell line comprises epithelial cells.

22. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 21, wherein the human epithelial cells are HeLa cells.

23. (Withdrawn) A method for screening test compounds which inhibit HCV replication, comprising:

a) culturing the cell line of claim 20 in the presence and absence of a test compound; and

b) assaying HCV replication levels in the presence and absence of said test compound, wherein a reduced HCV replication level in the presence of said test compound is indicative that said test compound inhibits HCV replication.

24. (Withdrawn) A method for screening test compounds which modulate the antiviral response induced by interferon alpha (IFN- α) comprising

a) culturing the cell line of claim 20 in the presence and absence of a test compound;

b) contacting the cells of step a) with IFN- α ; and

c) measuring the HCV replication level in the presence and absence of said compound thereby identifying agents which modulate the antiviral response mediated by IFN- α as a function of altered HCV levels.

25. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24, wherein the antiviral response is enhanced.

26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24, wherein the antiviral response is inhibited.

27. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 1, wherein

said HCV genome is a HCV subgenome.

28. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 20, wherein said HCV genome is a HCV subgenome.

29. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 1, wherein said HCV genome is obtained from a second cell line which replicates HCV.

30. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 28, wherein said second cell line is a Huh7 derived cell line.

31. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 20, wherein said second cell line is a Huh7 derived cell line.

32. (Previously Presented) The cell line of claim 20, wherein said RNA from the second cell line is the total RNA.